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ABSTRACT

Education serves as a backdrop and a disguise, masking the transformation of this country from an industrialized blue-collar dependent system to a technocratic system dependent upon fewer, but highly educated workers. This movement has tremendous implications for race relations in this country. An in-depth study of the history of school reform reveals that past reforms have produced very little in important social and economic benefits for the masses, and this is especially true for the poor. Instead of encouraging change, this whole dynamic helps to legitimatize a class-structured, hierarchical social system, based upon race and class--a plantation model. A gentrification process permits lighter-skinned persons who live in the United States to melt into the acceptable culture once they have acquired the mannerisms and symbols of the middle and upper classes. This dynamic does not occur among darker-skinned citizens. The current educational reform disguises the calculated and extreme process of reduction in black professional educators so that established procedures will assure that the chief executive officers/managers in all settings will be of white ethnic hues and that the aides and lower-ranking professionals with minimal educational backgrounds will be of other ethnic origins. Examples of recent incidents indicative of racial disharmony are included. (BZ)

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Integration Has Arrived Down South

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PROLOGUE

I am a professional who must understand what I see going on around me. If something is not making sense as to appropriate human behavior, I find that I must research it until it does make sense to me.

When all of the reports on education began to come out, it seemed like all of the nation's bullies were ganging up to beat up on the neighborhood wimp or coward. But whenever this behavior occurs, the wimp or coward has been so acclaimed by the consensus of and the cooperation of all parties involved, including the wimp or coward. I had to understand why public education has participated by playing the role of the wimp for more than 100 years. Does it willingly cooperate, or cannot it help itself?

I have critically researched this behavior historically and I share with you at this time my perceptions and conclusions.

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Integration Has Arrived Down South.

There are current societal dynamics that have significant implications for the current and future academic preparation of Black teachers and for the achievement of Black students. School reform movements are as much accepted as are the concepts of free enterprise and the Fourth of July within the social systems of the United States. None of the current issues in education have much to do with education per se. Education is serving as the backdrop and as a disguise, cloaking the change in this country from an industrialized massive blue-collar dependent system to a technocratic system dependent upon fewer, but highly educated personnel. This movement has grave implications for racial issues in this country.

Historically, in nearly every decade, and within every generation since the beginning of the Common School movement in the mid-nineteenth century, this country has made an attempt as its patriotic duty to rise up as a nation and sound a clarion call for national school reform. The basic format in these efforts has been one of promoting the goal of improving the nation's overall economy and social system. Educational historians have shown rather convincingly that there do exist wide disparities and divergent thinking between the rhetoric of school reformers and the actual social and economic benefits derived from such dynamics. A major school reform effort has accompanied every major social change in this country since the beginning of the Common School movement which accompanied the flood of new Americans as immigrants to this country (Hubbell, 1910).

Horace Mann has been credited with being most crucial to the effort of the establishment of free public education in the United States during the mid-nine-

teenth century. He wrote about economic and social benefits that would be derived from this phase of school reform. Mann told the poor and working classes that free education could elevate their social status. He simultaneously told the middle and upper classes that Common Schools would lead to social security and to social and economic progress for all. In an ideological frame of reference compatible with economic theories of free enterprise, Mann said that education was an essential parent of material riches and that it was the surest means of acquiring and amassing property. He felt that schools were the balancing mechanism of our social machinery. But this reform movement cloaked the essential establishment of and public acceptance of the free enterprise system as first espoused by Adam Smith during the late eighteenth century (Blum, et al.,1973).

Mann told the conservative propertied classes that adequate tax support for free common schools was the cheapest means of societal self-protection. He asked the question, "Where else could one find any police so vigilent and effective for the protection of all rights of person, property, and character, as such a sound and comprehensive education and training as this system of common schools could impart?" (Hubbell, 1910).

The work of these early reformers established the rationale from which most subsequent school reforms were to develop for the following 150 years. Almost every subsequent school reform effort since that time has emphasized the potential social and economic benefits to be accrued.

During the decades from 1900 to 1920, vocational education became firmly established in secondary schools after a major political struggle. Proponents of vocational education said that it would help this nation to better compete with the advanced industrial nations at that time (our German war opponents). Rarely does anyone suggest that this reform idea was a disguise to cloak the efforts to socialize and Americanize the new European immigrants while simultaneoulsy freezing their

upward mobility at the blue-collar level as I do. A concurrent new efficiency movement, spearheaded by the emerging field of Educational Administration, surfaced in the 1920's and continued for several decades. After this movement, schools were modeled after what school reformers held in high esteem - the economic efficiency shown in the management of the steel industry. Isn't that a real joke in the 1980's when the steel industry in the United States is almost a bankrupt ghost.

In the 1920's, 1930's, and 1940's, John Dewey's progressive education movement set out to reform the schools to become models of democratic behavior, socially incorporating and practicing democracy while serving all classes of United States citizens. This country would not only prosper economically from this reform movement, but it would also fulfill its historic mandate of freedom and justice for all. Remember that all of this activity cloaked the separate but unequal schools of the south and the neighborhood schools of the north which fostered educational apartheid in both settings.

During the war years and through the 1960's the United States reached unparallelled economic prosperity. This was due to the fact that most of the other modern nations' industries were essentially destroyed during the second World War, and most certainly not because of any positive effects from our then struggling and bulging educational system. Again the nation's school system was to be thrust into a new wave of reform to meet the challenges of the Cold War as we raced to meet the challenges of space and arms build-up competition with the Russians.

The 1970's was a decade of the "accountability" and "career education" reform movements, both of which were inter-related and designed to stem the tide of this country's downward drift in international economic competition, especially with the the Japanese entrepreneurs. The national and state reform reports developed on education in the 1980's are merely a continuation of linking school reform dynamics to

meeting today's international competition in spite of their continuing rhetoric about excellence. This competition is especially a force in the high technology industries. Specifically, this whole reform movement provides a vocal coverup for the fact that this country is no longer a major industrialized nation and that we are now in an age of technology in which the population masses required for work in the mills and factories are no longer needed. The current school reform activity is the disguise that cloaks the economic change in this country from an industrialized system needing massive numbers of blue-collar workers of all ethnic and racial hues, to a technocratic system dependent upon fewer, but highly-educated personnel most of whom will be white as the plantation model is firmly put in place in all of our social systems.

A study of the history of school reform shows that those who argue for it as a way of improving social and economic conditions are arguing from a naive and ahistorical human capital perspective. An in-depth study reveals that past reforms have produced very little in important social and economic benefits for the masses, and especially is this true for the poor. Historically, school reform has not served the best social and economic interests of this country. It has only served to instill in the public's mind the illusion that the powerful forces in society <u>are</u> interested in changing the system in order to better serve the masses. School reform is the safest and most conservative type of reform that is proposed in our society. School client populations are youthful and have no vote and therefore no political power. Historically, school reform has most often been the ruse that diverted public thinking away from more critically needed social and economic reforms. This whole dynamic helps to legitimatize a class-structured, hierarchical social system, based upon race and class that I choose to call a plantation model.

Current social science researchers note that there is a very specific underlying social goal hidden within this current reform thrust. The major social institutions that have evolved and are in place so far in the United States incorporate

six large groups (which of course can be further subdivided). These six major social institutions, which also contain multiple layers of workers, are:

- Finance (banking, money management, capital development)
- Housing (the purchase or rental of personal shelter or shelter for business, recreational, or other purposes)
- Justice (judges, lawyers, courts, incarceration facilities, managers and their supervised staffs, including governmental structures)
- Transportation (movement of persons and things from one place to another with appropriate vehicles)
- Health Care (health maintenance, prevention of illness, short or long-term care, appropriate facilities)
- Education (higher education, elementary and secondary schools, special and specific professional schools, proprietary schools).

In each of the first five social systems a descriptive ranking of professionals and layers of workers shows a pattern that I call the plantation model. Closely defined, this can mean human and professional employment assignment based upon ethnic origin or skin color. In each of the first five systems, the chief executive officers and top-level managers/decision-makers are predominantly of white skin coloring and the majority of the large numbers of hands-on personal care givers includes an inappropriately high percentage of Black or Brown Americans. For verification of this, walk into any of these institutional settings, and unless you are truly color-blind, you will find visual verification of my statement.

The United States is structured from many cultural backgrounds and racial diversity with varying levels of social acceptance given to each group by this country's established value system (Smith, 1969, & Rivlin and Robinson, 1968, &

Harrington, 1963). This dynamic aids in the behavioral aspects of the plantation model and colonialism as they occur around us daily as almost invisible entities. We can see this in Indian Reservations, Hispanic enclaves, Black enclaves, Jewish enclaves, super-rich enclaves, and enclaves of poverty. Business entrepreneurs lobby and manipulate the political structures of this country so that laws that permit capital gains and opportunities to exploit the less acceptable social groups to accrue to them are passed by the governing bodies. A gentrification process permits the lighter-skinned persons who live in the United States to melt into the acceptable culture once they have acquired the mannerisms and symbols of the middle and upper classes. This gentrification/ melting-pot dynamic does not occur among darker-skinned citizens of this country. Some illusion of acceptance occurs among the well-educated, monied, darker-skinned citizens, but they, too, do not ever fully melt into social acceptability and cultural invisibility.

Educational systems in northern parts of this country have exhibited a plantation model as a descriptor for many decades. A few top positions have been won by Blacks, but most Black Americans have been socially, economically, and psychologically isolated in urban ghettos of the north while farmland and suburbs supported White populations. The same dynamic occurred in the public schools where a selected few Black students were prepared to go on to professional higher education. Legal desegregation has combined with calculated fiscal restraints to precipitate a demise of predominantly Black educational institutions (from which about 85% of Black American leadership emerged). The largest pool of Black professionals ever prepared in this country were educated in the segregated schools of the south with Black teachers and administrators. I suggest that the current educational reform is a disguise cloaking the calculated and extreme process of reduction in Black professional educators so that established procedures will assure that the chief executive officers/managers in all settings will be of White ethnic hues and that

the aides and lower-ranking professionals with minimal educational backgrounds will be of other ethnic origins. Thus, we are observing the establishment of my defined plantation model (or the northern United States version of integration) as a totality in the last and the largest social system in this country .....education.

The most critical area of education to all of us at this conference is higher education because it restricts the future achievement of all Black Americans through.....

- decrease in current leadership participation and decision-making.
- decrease in current Black professional preparation levels for future leadership roles.
- decrease in current appropriate educational opportunities for Black Americans from kindergarten through higher education.
- decrease in the future availability of Black Americans as students, business and community leaders, and professionals for all of life in the United States and the rest of the world via State Department and business contacts.
- development of a behavior of internicine warfare among Black professionals who fight over the crumbs of success that are available to them as they emulate the behaviors of their White colleagues who seem to feel that any behavior that rewards them is appropriate.
- allowing a horrible statistic like my personal experience to occur wherein out of the 36 first graders starting to school in my class, I am the only one that I recall graduating from high school.

There are professional employees in the multi-facets of education who are currently agonizing over their silent participation in what they perceive to be conspiracies of silence which protect poor teaching and ineffective schools. They

seem to be what a widely-acclaimed Nobel Peace Prize winner notes (as I paraphrase the statement).....

> The constituents are upset and tired.....they do not know what to do .....you try to be someone who is seeking to help to bring about change ..... It is only that we become innured to things to which we should never become accustomed to - like tracking of students, unequal discipline standards, unequal distribution of resources and course access. I fear that in the end the critics of current educational practices in righteous indignation, will exhibit what may be called a Samson complex. Reformers may be able to pull down the pillars of public education and every part of the system will fall down with the pillars.

These agonizing concerns are the foundations of the ethical questions that are raised to address in part, a single segment of the whole professional problem of plantation modeling in the United States, where the behaviors are as accepted as motherhood and the Fourth of July by all of us.

I cite from the media excerpts that corroborate my statements about racial plantation models in the United States.

Housing

> Housing an Urban Development Secretary Samuel R. Pierce, Jr. angrily disputed the statistics presented by National Urban League President John Jacob as Mr. Jacob cited "a slippery sliding away from this country's goal of equality.....For Black Americans, it is the difference between bad conditions and intolerable conditions, between marginal status and no status". Black unemployment has grown from 10% to 15% since 1974. During that same span, the percentage of Black people who can be classified as poor grew from 28% to 33%.
>
> Mr. Pierce admitted that housing discrimination remains a serious

national problem. "What kind of liberty, what kind of justice allows people, because of race, to deprive a family of the home they seek, restricting them to Black enclaves only, and which may be substandard as well". (Daily News Record, 1986) The subtlety and sophistication of current discrimination render it no less demeaning or dispiriting to the people and communities involved in this process (of access to housing by color).

Law /Justice

Washington,D.C. attorney Frederick B. Abrahamson, aged 50, and a partner in the local law firm of Sachs, Greenbaum & Taylor, who recently assumed the presidency of the 40,000 member D.C. Bar Association, maintains that the nation's top law firms are still segregated and that there appears to be little change in sight.

Pointing to a National Law Journal study that indicates that in 1984 only 1.5% of the attorneys in the country's largest law firms were Black, Mr. Abramson said, "The law firms are still nearly segregated today. (The Black partners) are meaningful only in the sense that they are there.... I don't see the situation changing anytime soon (Jet Magazine, 1983)."

Politics/Local Governments

The number of Black elected officials at all levels of government increased last year, yet Blacks held only 1.3% of the nation's 490,000 elective offices, according to the Joint Center for Political Studies.

The Center, a think tank on black issues, said that Blacks held 6,424 offices at the end of 1985 compared with 6,056 at the beginning of that year, a 6.1 percent increase, with gains occurring in every region and every type of office. Of the 6,424 elected Blacks, 1,483 are women.

Foreign Service

Of the 4,014 career Foreign Service officers, 257 or 6% are Black, according to EEOC figures. Terrence Todman, who recently was considered the leading candidate to be an envoy to South Africa, is one of six Black ambassadors out of the world total of 150. The Senior Service, from which assistant secretaries and ambassadors come from, has 635 members of which there are nine Black men and no Black women (Omang,1986).

Higher Education

A nationwide pattern is evident. Rather than growing, the number of Black scholars at predominantly white institutions is decreasing or at best remaining constant. The Black presence - faculty, students, administrators, support staff - reached a high point early in this decade and has been declining ever since. California State University at Berkeley shows a 50% drop in Black students in the past five years (Black Enterise,1978).

Public Schools

"One night two years ago, I was stunned to watch more than 400 students climb to the stage at a Fairfax high school shaking the hands of Board members as they received awards.....I was stunned because in a school system with 10,000 Black students, only two of them got on stage that night (Latimer, 1986). The combination of tracking students, unequal grading practices, and lack of opportunity to practice leadership behaviors for Black students, combine to assure that very few non-white students are ever a part of this award-winning cluster of students.

Another Instance

The implementation of merit systems for teacher pay and promotion rewards can lead to further stratification of public school staffs by skin-color and ethnic heritage. At one time in the integrated city of Cleveland, Ohio, tenure with

attendant pay increases, were given only to teachers who passed the National Teacher's Examinations with a specific percentile score that was far above the scores required currently for certification in the state of Virginia. Of more than 4,000 teachers in that large metropolitan setting, I suggest that there were only about twenty Black teachers who achieved tenure and were then eligible for all of the other advantages that this status brings to a professional. The rest of the large number of Black teachers who worked in the primarily Black communities worked on year-to-year contracts and were subjected to recommendations by their supervisors and principals on a year-to-year basis.

Public School Communities

Of significant influence upon the level of learning that occurs in public school settings are the community behaviors that occur in the school settings and spill over into the schools' daytime curriculums. The staff reports noted here give an indication of the levels of racial and criminal/violent behaviors that must frighten and impede the learning process in vulnerable students.

Toledo,Ohio

"Three teenagers were arrested Thursday for shotgun attacks at the homes of Black families this week, and city officials introduced members of a task force formed to ease racial tension here.

Besides the shootings, a cross was burned at the home of a Black family Sunday night.

The three youths, who live in the same neighborhood where the shootings occured, will be charged with delinquency offenses....(Daily News Record, 1986).

Detroit, Michigan

A summer spate of shootings and the highest murder rate in the country have officials groping for ways to suppress firearms violence that is plaguing the nation's sixth-largest city. Police records show that 266 people were shot in

June, 1986, forty-two of them fatally. During a single weekend there were twelve fatal shootings. In July, 1986, 307 people were shot and fifty-one died. On Wednesday, the first day of school in Detroit, a fifteen-year-old ninth-grader was shot and critically wounded outside his high school. He was the victim of a fellow student.

- One Sunday, a seven-year-old girl and her three-year-old brother were seriously injured when bullets sprayed their house while they slept.
- A sixteen-year-old girl was killed and a friend seriously wounded by three youths who alledgedly shot-up a chaperoned party they had been turned away from.
- On Detroit's bloodiest weekend of the summer, June 27-29, forty-three people were shot, and twelve were killed.

A minister in Detroit said ," Unemployment in the city stands at about twenty percent and at about fifty percent among the teenagers. Poverty invites the escape to drugs (Daily News Record, 1986)."

Long Beach, California

In this suburb of Los Angeles, a concert by a leading rock group RUN-DMC was used by some members of the more than 400 gangs from many ethnic groups as a site for gang fights and violence over turf and status. Nearly 200 people were injured and about twenty were killed in this fracas that started before the concert began. Historically these gang fights have always accompanied the arrival of waves of new immigrants in this country as is occurring in the south west with orientals and hispanics as the new arrivals.

Rockville, Maryland

At about 1:00 a.m. the family of Ho Won Ahn was awakened from their sleep by a phone call from the hospital. Their son was dead on arrival from a stab wound in the stomach. He had been involved in a melee with about sixteen other Korean

youths who beat each other with their fists and an assortment of weapons, including baseball bats, an axe, and an oriental flail called nunchaku (Sinclair, 1986).

The Director of Black Studies at the University of Washington, Edward W. Cosby, asserts that it is white people who determine what is important..... to teach, how to teach it, and whether the teaching is well done. Mr. Cosby agrees with Carter Woodson that much of Black people's education is miseducation, blinding Black folk, rather than preparing them to deal with the realities of oppression. He goes on to conclude that "American Africans have survived on this continent for more than four hundred years, but the education they now receive..... threatens to cancel out the future of Black people as such in this nation and to make irrelevant their true socio-political connections with the rising African World" (Wideman, 1978).

When people approach me about discussions about South Africa, I respond that since there are more Black people imprisoned in the United States today than there are in South Africa, I would prefer to adress the issue in this country. But there is one recommendation about the current situation in South Africa that I think is vital and would like to see it implemented in the United States. Washington, D.C.'s Episcopal Bishop, in recent testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee outlined a series of tactics that multi-national corporations in South Africa might engage in to speed up the end of apartheid. The recommendations include:

1. Buy houses in "primarily white areas" and assign them to Black employees.
2. Relocate corporate headquarters to areas "within easy reach by Black people who can then be promoted to more supervisory positions.
3. Allocate franchises "in primarily white areas to Black business persons".
4. Give Black workers stock options "as part of their overall wage system. With stock ownership, workers will develop an appreciation of capitalism

the notion of risk and reward, and above all, the freedom to choose" (Hyer, 1986).

In addition, Mr. Walker, the Episcopal Bishop, urged the multinationals to impose upon themselves an apartheid tax which would reflect a reasonable proportion of the profits they made from apartheid. (I smile as I reflect upon such a proposal for the southern states in this country as an appropriate response for the profits they made from slavery in this country.) American and multinational companies that operate in the United States could accomplish these activities in this country and thereby resolve this country's version of apartheid, both the northern version of integration as well as the southern version, both of which emulate the plantation model and both of which have now arrived down south. Educational quality is an idea that has fallen from favor. In the eighties, we have decided that excellence is what we want and that somehow excellence and equality are incompatible (Oakes,1985). But for all of us who have taught the poor and minority groups know that it is possible to have equality and excellence in education.

What are all of you as educational professionals going to do about the process that is already operational in this country. There may still be time to help stem the tide of educational regression for Black Americans if all of us work at it. Personally, I plan to still be working at it until the day I die. How about you?

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